

THE

2657

S P E E C H

OF



M. MOREAU DE ST. MERRY.

Spoken in the Assembly of the Electors of Paris,
July 29, 1789.

LONDON :

SOLD by J. P. Lepard, No. 91. Newgate-Street;
Symonds, No. 20. Pater-noster Row; and L. J.
Higham, No. 159, St. John's-Street, Clerkenwell.
1790.

9.

M

r

T

fre

tic

ben

pr

ma

no

we

H

wh

en

ey

w

w

D

m

fi

an

THE SPEECH
OF
M. MOREAU DE ST. MERRY.

ELECTORS OF PARIS,
CITIZENS, FRENCHMEN!

THE glorious epoch is now arrived, when France quits her chains, emerges from her darkness, and is warmed to animation, by the bright beams of the *Sun of Liberty*. The moment is of vast import, the prize is invaluable; for the noblest rights of mankind, and the happiness of millions, must now or never be asserted and secured. If we succeed, future ages shall honour us as HEROES, shall worship us as DEITIES, while our immediate and immense reward is —*the salvation of our country!* O God-like enthusiasm! The tear of joy bursts from my eyes; my full heart struggles with ecstasy, when I behold you all assembled in a cause worthy of yourselves—the CAUSE of FREEDOM! Then be strenuous, be united, be moderate—yet be unshaken!

With minds enlightened, and with hearts sincere, we have long groaned in bondage, and been treated with ignominy. Brave in
A 2 character,

character, generous in disposition, magnanimous in exertion, we have yet been SLAVES—but even then were PATRIOTS. Rejoice, ye men of virtue! ye men of honor! ye men of wisdom! The patriotism of France is no longer *prejudice*; it is now founded in reason, it is now fixed on truth. The abominable and inhuman engine of unrelenting despotism is destroyed—the Bastile is annihilated, and the wretch who governed it, and who was worthy of his trust, is now no more: he has justly paid the price of his treachery; his infamy has met with its reward.

Yet let the remembrance of the tyranny of that state-prison live for ever in your bosoms; recollect that its miserable victims were sacrificed, with a shameless secrecy, at the altar of private malice. Alas! yes; without justice, and without appeal, your fellow-creatures, your countrymen, have languished away their lives in horrid dungeons, and thro' years of solitary sufferance have had no consolation but from frenzy, no hope but death! I must pause; for the idea of such barbarity, and of such endurance, choaks my utterance, and overcomes me. O may it also confirm you in your duty!

My friends! It is necessary for us frequently to call to mind, that *Kings are only respectable as they are useful*; if they reign but for themselves, or sacrifice the public good
to

to their private gratifications, they are to be considered as destructive monsters, and are only fit to be extirpated. A monarch possesses a fictitious, but no natural superiority whatever. The original intent of his elevation was for the general advantage, and the people are in conscience no longer bound to obey him, than he has merit to deserve obedience.

Our present gracious King is, indeed, moderate and conciliating; he *seems* to place his confidence in the affection of his *fellow-citizens*; he appears willing, in future, to exert his proper authority in the manner that he OUGHT; — but Sovereigns, from their situations, are generally revengeful, and not seldom insincere: Flattery weakens their principles, and pride swallows up their humanity. Besides, the best of them are but too often the dupes of designing men, and are liable to be governed by infamous *women*, or presumptuous ministers, and are, for the most part, totally incapable of forming a fair estimate of their relative duties.

To prove this assertion true, we have only to consider the late pernicious councils that had nearly induced our *mild* monarch to bring slaughter to his capital. Yes; it certainly was the intention of the court to attack Paris with an army, which, led on by some presumptuous and slavish-minded noblemen,

noblemen, was to enforce submission by devastation, and to establish authority by BLOOD. Nay more; this horrid plan was concerted under the *auspices* of an *exalted Female Fiend*, and was to have been executed by *illustrious* assassins and *royal* miscreants. Yet, by the blessing of Heaven, it has failed. An army of Frenchmen disdained to massacre their brethren; but nobly joined themselves in support of the common cause.

By such conduct they have not only covered themselves with laurels, which no time can wither, but they have also taught an useful lesson to despotism, and have shaken the security of ALL TYRANTS.

But though the country has thus escaped perdition, let us not be vainly deluded, or suppose a merit where it does not exist; let us follow the example of the ANCIENT BRITONS, and withhold from our *chief magistrate* the POWER of doing EVIL—Let him *confer* benefits, but not *inflict* chastisement. Let him *pardon*, but not *condemn*.

Advanced so far in the great work of national reformation, powerful and collected as we are, it behoves us to avoid licentiousness and disorder. The enemies of the people deserve punishment; but as MEN, they have a right to a fair trial.

We ought indeed at this time to be severe,

vere, and perhaps implacable; but at this time also we must be JUST.

The first energy of a free people consists in the due enforcement of wholesome and impartial laws, without which all must be anarchy, violence, and desolation.

The administration of the laws of England is the first boast of the inhabitants of that country; yet by facilitating the mode of obtaining justice for all ranks of men, I trust we shall go beyond them, and be as much superior to them in this respect, as I doubt not we shall be by the possession of GENERAL FREEDOM.

Let us then take warning from the visible decay in the British constitution; let us prevent corruption, and render courtly influence impossible, and let us never suffer ourselves to be governed by *artificial majorities*, or *insolent ministers*; for, from such causes, it is more than probable that Great Britain will gradually sink into the wretched state of civil slavery, from which we have so recently escaped. Nor have we any reason to respect or imitate the apparent principles of the present *leading* men in that country; for do we not know that a Lord Camelford, a near relative, and an intimate friend of the renowned Mr. Pitt, has dared, with a presumption equal to his folly, to publish a flimsy work,

here, in support of arbitrary power, and in opposition to the dearest rights of men. If such vipers are generated in Britain, they shall scatter their venom ineffectually in this liberated land; and should *Englishmen* be so *lost* as to approve, *France* shall have the *virtue* to detest them.

O my dear countrymen, what a rapturous prospect now opens itself to our view—what a sight of glory and exultation! Twenty-four millions of inhabitants, in the finest and most fertile country in the world, regaining, at once, their natural rights, and starting into Liberty—Unspeakable delight! Ignorance, Oppression, Servility, and Prejudice, shall disappear, while Wisdom, Genius, and Virtue, shall rise triumphant; we shall henceforth be unrivalled in renown, unmatched in industry, unequalled in riches, invincible in arms.—Frenchmen shall be the admiration of the globe, and France its everlasting Paradise!



